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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Czech Farm and Machine Tool Exhibits at Milano Industrial Fair

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SOURCE

1. In late April 1953 I saw Czech farm equipment and machine tools on exhibit at the Industrial Fair in Milano, Italy. The farm equipment exhibit included several different tractors, plows, harrows, and other miscellaneous items. I am not a farmer so I could not identify all the equipment or determine whether it was comparable in construction or workmanship to similar US equipment. From the different names (which I cannot recall) on the tractors, it appeared that they were built by several factories. Three or four well-dressed and intelligent appearing men were in charge of the exhibit.
2. In the machine tool exhibit building, Czechoslovakia also displayed ten various types of tools. I noted that the display included two lathes, a shaper and a radial drill. None of the items had the excellent finish which similar tools from Western European manufacturers have. In fact, although I am unfamiliar with such tools, I would judge that the Czech tools were poor compared to those used in Western Europe or the US. Again I saw three or four well-dressed men in charge and noted an absence of descriptive literature at both the farm and tool exhibits. This is not strange since Europeans are not as accustomed to distributing such literature as US manufacturers are. Finally, in the few hours I was present, I observed that, while other tool exhibits were well attended, the Czech display seemed to attract only a few people.
3. One of my Italian friends told me that the USSR did not exhibit at the Fair this year 1953 but in 1952 had a very large display. My friend thought that the Soviets used the 1952 exhibit more for political propaganda than for increasing Western Europe's interest in Soviet goods. He did not cite any reasons or examples to support his belief.

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